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there is a tinge of infidelity in the human mind, the child of the hell-begotten doctrine that men can be saved without the means taught in the Gospel, that I believe it would be no exaggeration to say eight tenths of the professors of Christianity are ready to flatly contradict this plain statement by the apostle Peter. But Peter is not alone in the declaration of this truth. Paul, as already quoted declares that Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth, before he ascended, which agrees with his own statement to Mary in the garden on the morning of the resurrection. But a stronger declaration, if possible, comes from the prophecy of Daniel in reference to Christ's resurrection. "Therefore did my heart rejoice and my tongue was glad, moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." Ps. 16: 8-11. This, Peter declares, David spoke as a prophet, concerning the resurrection of Christ, and that the import of the resurrection was, that the soul, or spirit of Christ was not left in hell, and that his body did not see corruption." Acts 2: 31. Now there could be no propriety in the pen of inspiration speaking of leaving the soul of Christ in hell unless it was there.

Let tender-footed and semi-infidel Christianity scoff as it will, I accept it as a truth, that Christ's mission in the great work of redemption extended beyond the confines of earth, that he is the redeemer of the whole human race, and that he will save all, in the body or out of the body, who will accept his terms, and that his terms differ according to the different conditions; the innocent child is saved purely by the atoning blood; having no law is guilty of no transgression. The benighted Pagan will be judged by the law that he has; that is, the law of nature, rude though it may be. Rom. 2: 14. The enlightened and civilized portion of the human race will be saved, if saved at all, by the means taught in the Gospel as it may apply in its spiritual and corporeal sense, and methinks God will be more rigid in its application to us than to any of the other conditions, because of our superior advantages. The spirits in prison who were out of the body when the atoning blood was shed, had only the spiritual portion of the Gospel preached to them being deprived of corporeal existence they had no use for ceremonial means. The living, being in the body, it was necessary for Christ to assume a body to preach to them, but it was only necessary for him to go in the spirit to preach to spirits, and in proportion as they possess means to obey the Gospel, they will be judged by it the same as men in the flesh." 1 Peter 4: 6

While there is such a wide spread disposition to discredit the doctrine of Christ's mission to the spirit world, we shall offer a few additional evidences.

Christ is the propitiation for our sins and not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2: 2. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3: 8.

Suppose a foreign nation would invade our shores and capture a number of our people, take them to their inhospitable country and consign them to perpetual slavery, keep up this work year after year, destroying our cities and leading our people into captivity. Finally our government becomes aroused and fits out an armed expedition and suppose the men of this army proceed to this unfriendly land and skirmish around their borders, capture a few of their citizens and return, could they truthfully report that they destroyed the enemy's works! Or the works of the enemy! Surely not, in order to accomplish the work effectually, our forces must land and capture their cities, their armies, their navy, blow up their arsenals, scale the walls of their fortifications, enter their forts, capture their defenders, release the prisoners and bring them back to liberty, then and not until then could the expedition report that the enemy's works are destroyed. All this, and much more was necessary for Christ to do in order to destroy the works of the devil. He had not only to come to earth, but He had to enter the prison house of death, preach deliverance to the captives, burst the bars of death and "lead captivity captive." All of which He did and He can truthfully say, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death." Rev. 1: 18. I wish we could more fully realize the magnitude of the task that the Son of God undertook, and comprehend more clearly the extent of the glory of his triumphs. I think we could form a better estimate of the infinitude of the excellent glory when his great task is finally completed. I think too it would make us more loyal to his teachings, and more zealously careful of his doctrine. But it will be asked what has all this to do with the penitent thief? It has

very much to do with him. Allow me to say, this was a special case, out of the ordinary course of events, he repented late in life, too late to attend to the conditions of Salvation as they apply to men in the flesh, but, the testament was not yet sealed; the testator was yet alive and granted him a special favor, none less than the privilege of going with the Lord to the under world and there take his chances with those who died without the knowledge of a Redeemer, and I have no doubt but that he made the best of his opportunity: Be that as it may his case cannot in any sense be regarded as a precedent for the reason that a similar condition never was before, and never could be hereafter. Christ never will be crucified again, and hence no penitent malefactor can be favored with a similar opportunity. After the testator "gave up the ghost" the testament became operative and by it we must work out our salvation and by it we shall be judged. There is no difficulty in the case whatever except the difficulty of unbelief, remove that, and believe the plain statements in the Book bearing upon the subject, and the case of the penitent thief is as plain, and as clear, and as easily understood as any other case in the gospel. A few words in regard to the word Paradise, and we are done. Theologians, historians, Biblical scholars, and literary men in general by no means agree as to its meaning and locality. It is generally agreed that the word is not of Greek origin, but rather Asiatic, Persian; possibly a descendant of the ancient Hindoo language. Webster says, In the Sanskrit language, that is, the perfect, polished or classical language, the word is defined as a "Foreign Land." It has been variously located. About the river Euphrates. Under the Mount of Olives near Jerusalem. Above the sky—in the heart of the earth—and under the earth etc. See Smith's Bible Dictionary. My own conclusion, drawn from the gospel, and the circumstances connected with the case under consideration, is, that the word literally means, a place inhabited by disembodied spirits, a spirit land. The word occurs only three times in the New Testament, and I invite special attention to Rev. 2: 7 where we read about "the paradise of God." The qualifying phrase "of God" could say, there is more than one paradise. The "hand of God" implies that there are other hands beside that of God. The other place where the word is found is in 2 Cor. 12: 4. And evidently means the paradise of God, or if you please, the spirit land of God, but the nature of this language implies the existence of another spirit land, which is the paradise the Saviour descended to when He left his body on the Cross, and after He finished his work there, He returned to the tomb, where a special envoy from Jehovah's body guard, rolled away the stone and the Spirit re-enters the body uncorrupted and incorruptible. He now calls his ambassadors together, and He can justly say, "All power is given unto me." "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, etc." "All things" whatsoever I commanded you, etc. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The Gospel is our plan of salvation not the thief on the cross.

Congress, Ohio.

THE GATES OF THE BIBLE.

BY SUSAN R. BLACK.

THE word means something movable, used for closing an entrance. It also implies a way. It is found in the Bible many times. It is connected with some very beautiful things. When Jacob went out from Beersheba toward Haran at a certain place he tarried all night, using a stone for his pillow. He fell asleep and dreamed there was a ladder set upon the earth, the top of which reached to heaven, and that the angels of God were ascending and descending, and that the Lord stood above and talked with him, prophesying concerning his posterity. Jacob awoke and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and this is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." Gen. 28: 17.

King David, the man after God's own heart, when he praised God for his mercies, said, "Open to me the gates of righteousness! I will go into them for to praise the Lord." The king petitioned the Lord to have mercy, and the Lord lifted him from the gates of death. Jesus used the term "gate" when he explained the entrance and way to salvation. He illustrates the spiritual by literal things in order to reach our understanding.

Our dear Master, in the seventh chapter of Matthew, represents two gates which portray two ways. The one opens to the way leading to destruction, the other to life everlasting. Jesus says, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it; but wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in

thereat." As our dear Savior went through the cities teaching, he confirmed and established these solemn facts.

Journeying toward Jerusalem he met with one, who, being free from timidity, and in an indifferent manner, said to him, "Lord are there few that be saved?" This person had a great and glorious privilege of asking the great Savior of mankind questions. Who would not wish to participate in such peculiar advantages? Yet the inquiry was made by one who did not appreciate his opportunities. And more than all, he did not appear in earnest in seeking his own salvation. Yet Jesus manifested great compassion, kindly answering his questions. With earnest words of sympathy He said unto them, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." It is a fact that only a few set their minds and hearts to do our Master's will. It is manifest that they are enticed after the things of the world, and do but faintly seek to enter in at the "strait gate." With this faint striving they will not be able. It is through tribulation we pass. Without great labor and vigorous effort we can not enter the pearly gates of the eternal city of love. "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the lamb. Rev. 7: 13, 14. To enter the "strait gate" is to accept Christ and his scheme of redemption—to live the life of a Christian.

I have read about the beautiful gates of the new Jerusalem. I have heard them preached about. To me it is a beautiful story. There are three gates to each point of the compass,—on the north three gates, on the south three gates, on the east three gates, on the west three gates. Each gate is a solid pearl, and the streets of the city are pure gold, and the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof. The gates shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the lamb's book of life. See Rev. 21.

Oh, may every earnest, God-born soul ask, "Is my name of a truth written in the Lamb's book of life?" May we all have a right to enter in through the gates into the city. There will be a passport at the gate of heaven. Our passport must contain the requirements of Jesus or we can not pass. These requirements are the commandments of God. Let us strive to do the commandments, for, "blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22: 14. What excuse can we offer for rejecting the glad tidings which Jesus brought from heaven?

Can we not behold the breadth and depth of this gospel which says, "The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Whosoever, whosoever: however far we have wandered from God we can come back. Though we have violated all of the ten commandments "whosoever" will let him come: for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1: 7.

What plea or defense in justification can man offer to the offended Creator, who opened a way of mercy towards us? Will we refuse his gracious pardon and go down to everlasting ruin and degradation? There are only two gates and ways before us, and the power of choosing has been imparted to us. As king David said, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them for to praise the Lord." Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able. "Enter into his gates with thanks-giving, and into his courts with praise. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations." Psalms 100: 4, 5.

"There is a gate that stands ajar,
And through its portals gleaming,
A radiance from the cross afar,
The Savior's love revealing.

That gate ajar stands free for all
Who seek through it salvation:
The rich and poor, the great and small,
Of every tribe and nation."

Auburn, Ill.

Do not seek happiness in what is misnamed pleasure; seek it rather in what is termed study. Keep your conscience clear, your curiosity fresh and embrace every opportunity of cultivating your mind.